



COMDTINST 5710.2A  
DEC 22 1997

## COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 5710.2A

Subj: TOWARD 2020-U.S. COAST GUARD INTERNATIONAL STRATEGIC PLAN

1. PURPOSE. This Plan outlines the foundation of the Coast Guard's international efforts, describes forums and process for planning international activities, and projects long range vision and strategic goals. It includes the operational Assistant Commandants and Areas in establishing the tactical objectives and actions that describe our course. The Plan also informs and guides. Most Coast Guard men and women are knowledgeable of the many important missions the Coast Guard undertakes in the United States and on the high seas. It may not be as apparent that each of our missions has both a domestic and international character, and that the international aspect of the mission also serves our prime customers, the citizens of the United States. Simply stated, **"The Coast Guard engages internationally to benefit the Nation and further Coast Guard Missions"**
2. ACTION. This is not a program or business plan. It is a policy directive designed to assist Headquarters staffs and field commanders in the development of their annual business plans and long-range resource documents. Area and District Commanders, Commanders of Maintenance and Logistics Command, Commanding Officers of Headquarters Units, Assistant Commandants for Directorates, Chief Counsel, and Special Staff Offices at Headquarters shall ensure that their efforts are in concert with this Plan and long-range resource documents.
3. DIRECTIVE AFFECTED. COMDTINST 5710.2 is canceled.
4. DISCUSSION. Our working environment is commerce, transportation, and other activities that occur on, under and over the seas, an environment that is distinctly international in character. The strategic goals of our missions are common to much of the international maritime community. Domestically and on the high seas we routinely leverage our resources with neighboring nations and cooperate with distant nations. While

staying within our core competencies, we also contribute to the achievement of larger goals. The President promulgates a *National Security Strategy (NSS)* which directs a national strategy of engaging nations and enlarging United States influence. The purpose is to make the world safer and more prosperous, deter aggression, foster peaceful resolution of conflicts, open foreign markets, help democratic regimes, and solve global problems. The United States does this through a broad front of governmental and government-sanctioned commercial efforts. Military assistance is generally coordinated through the Department of State. Properly bound international engagement activities readily support the Coast Guard's vision and strategic goals, and NSS objectives in important ways including:

- a. **Maintaining U.S. Global Influence, Minimizing Threats to our Sovereignty.** As the world's premier maritime service, we have significant international credibility in each of our missions. Our unique capabilities are important tools for institution building activities. For example, we assist existing or former power projecting navies in their transition to peaceful maritime forces that support a nation's infrastructure.
- b. **Economic Prosperity.** Our port state control initiatives and leadership in international fora level the playing field of safety, waterways management, and environmental standards while reducing casualties and the resulting impacts.
- c. **Promotion of Democracy.** As a civilian-controlled military service with constabulary authority, we are the leading example of a military service that follows and practices the rule of law in a democratic society.
- d. **Preserving Domestic Law and Order.** International engagement improves our efforts to reduce smuggling of illicit materials and illegal migrants, builds host nation law enforcement capabilities to multiply our forces, and fosters U.S. policies and values.
- e. **Contributing to a Government which Works Better and Costs Less.** As a multi-mission Service, we can also rapidly reallocate resources for significant events. This provides excellent value to our citizens, and an important example to many nations.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES.

- a. Field commanders shall ensure that their policies and operations for international engagement are aligned with this directive.
- b. Area Commanders, Assistant Commandants for Marine Safety and Environmental Protection, Commandant G-M and Operations, Commandant G-O, and the Director, International Affairs, Commandant G-CI shall: annually update their engagement actions supporting the goals outlined herein; champion the execution of the plan, ensuring coordination with other international initiatives; reflect the intent of these international strategic goals in their annual business plans and long-range resource documents; and designate appropriate representatives to the International Advisory Group chartered by this Plan.

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- c. The Director, International Affairs shall: coordinate the Coast Guard's international activities; maintain both the International Strategic Plan and its adjunct, the International Engagement Plan (IEP); coordinate and monitor an annual update to the IEP; receive advice from the International Advisory Group on this Plan's execution; and periodically report to the Commandant on the status of the Plan.

/s/ R.D HERR  
Vice Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard  
Acting Commandant

Encl: (1) Coast Guard International Strategic Plan

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**Coast Guard International Strategic Plan**

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## **Executive Summary**

This International Strategic Plan presents a destination for the Coast Guard's international role, a course toward that destination, and the underway organization and processes for staying the course. The Plan articulates the Coast Guard's international vision and strategic goals described in Section 1. The central tenet of our international vision is that we pursue international engagement in support of the National Security Strategy and U.S. Foreign Policy to benefit the nation and further Coast Guard missions. International strategic goals, with time horizons of five or more years, are established in pursuit of this vision. These goals are applicable Coast Guard-wide and are the basis for Area and operational Program/Assistant Commandant Business and Long-Range Resource Plans containing supporting objectives and actions that also serve as elements within our annual International Engagement Plan.

Coast Guard international strategy is bounded and supported by the framework described in Section 2. That framework is based on the National Security Strategy and U.S. Foreign Policy objectives, Coast Guard strategic guidance, and domestic requirements. The scope of domestic and international operations and different types of international engagements are described and compared.

Section 3 describes organizational links and procedures for assessing, planning, and executing international engagement decisions. The key coordinating body in this process is the International Advisory Group (IAG). The one enclosure to the Plan is the IAG's Charter. The IAG is the forum in which G-CI coordinates the content of the various international plans, resolves conflicts, and ensures balance and consistency.

A closely associated document, the International Engagement Plan (IEP), uses this Plan's strategic framework and associated input derived from Area and Program/Assistant Commandant inputs to form its core elements. The Director, International Affairs uses the IEP as the basis for his recommendations to the Commandant for Coast Guard international activities and engagement for the coming year. The IEP will be updated annually.

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## **Coast Guard International Strategic Plan COAST GUARD INTERNATIONAL VISION**

Applying a balanced strategic framework of the National Security Strategy, Foreign Policy, Coast Guard Core Values and Competencies, and Domestic Requirements, the Coast Guard's international vision is:

**"The Coast Guard engages internationally to benefit the Nation and further Coast Guard Missions." In doing so, we:**

Demonstrate that our capabilities are a unique strategic asset which support both U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives.

Pursue appropriate international engagements that provide a high return on our resources when measured by improved operations, higher international standards, technology advances, and foreign policy successes.

Enhance our global credibility that comes from being recognized as the world's premier maritime service which enables us to promote international cooperation for the benefit of the United States, the Coast Guard, and the world maritime community.

Enhance international engagements through working in concert with U.S. agencies that complement Coast Guard capabilities.

## **COAST GUARD INTERNATIONAL STRATEGIC GOALS**

The following International Strategic Goals support the Commandant's vision:

1. Improve Coast Guard organizational linkages and processes that support our achievement of this Plan.
2. Promote Coast Guard engagement with foreign nations that are strategic to United States and Coast Guard interests; use the resources of partner nations as force multipliers in support of Coast Guard core missions.
3. Serve as an effective instrument of U.S. Foreign and National Security Policy.
4. Execute our role as a valued member of the U.S. Armed Forces and as an instrument of the National Military Strategy through the National Command Authorities (President/SECDEF) and the Department of Defense.
5. Serve as a role model and promote the development of selected maritime organizations of nations of strategic value to the United States or the Coast Guard.
6. Work to establish and implement international maritime safety and security, environmental and operating standards through leadership and participation in international forums.

## **Section 2**

### **Strategic Framework**

#### **Core Values, Domestic Requirements, & National Security**

Today's Coast Guard planners and operators allocate resources in a highly constrained environment. This Plan provides CG resource planners justification and rationale for the use of their resources in an international arena.

In evaluating why the Coast Guard should be engaged internationally it is critical to view this issue from an overarching Service strategy perspective (see figure 1). We allocate resources to implement a **Coast Guard Strategy**. This **Strategy** stems from what we determine to be **Coast Guard Interests and Objectives**. These interests and objectives are shaped by three broad criteria:

- 1. Coast Guard Core Values.** Our Core Values of honor, respect and devotion to duty are the heart and soul of the Coast Guard. They include the freedom of our citizens, our democratic government, a military service under civilian control, our respect for law, and our mandated missions. Our international activities shall be consistent with and promote our Core Values which will remain a constant regardless of the engagement level or the type of commitment. Unique to us are the Coast Guard's five strategic goals attained through a balanced mix of skills and multi-mission resources. Those goals are under the general categories of Safety, Protection of Natural Resources, Mobility, Coastal Border Protection, and National Defense (from the 1996 mission statement and strategic goals prepared under the *Government Performance and Results Act*).
- 2. Domestic Requirements.** Domestic requirements weigh heavily in forming Coast Guard Strategy. Our balance between missions is set by many criteria including mandate, customer need, urgency, and political sensitivity. Generally a relatively stable allocation of resources meets routine customer requirements for safe vessels, aids to navigation, vessel documentation, etc. Unexpected or rapidly changing customer needs demand a reallocation of resources, e.g., the resource demands of a marine casualty or natural disaster may require suspending performance of routine missions.
- 3. National Security Strategy.** National security and foreign policy are described in the President's *National Security Strategy*. Applications of this policy important to the Coast Guard as one of the five military services include the *National Military Strategy of the United States of America*, and regional CINC Plans such as *United States Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region*. In a rapidly changing world, national policy is fluid and always subject to confirmation by the Department of State (DOS).

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Figure 1. Coast Guard Strategy and resource allocation process.

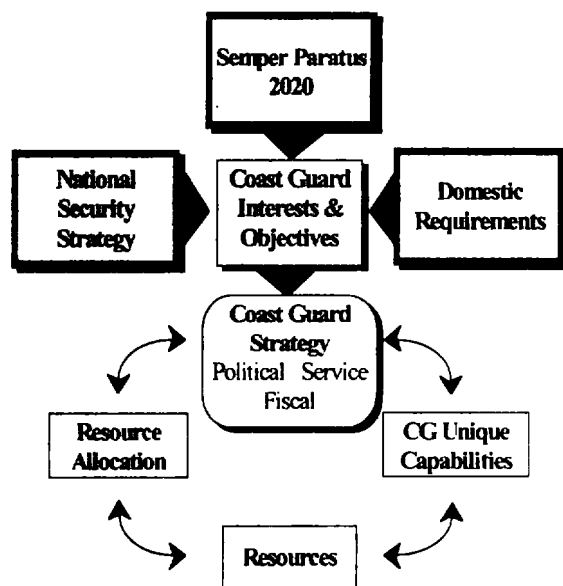


Figure 1. Coast Guard Strategy and resource allocation process.

### Coast Guard International Strategic Plan

Using **Semper Paratus 2020** as a foundation, we routinely consider **Domestic Requirements** criteria when allocating resources, but we need to sharpen our skills in applying the **National Security Strategy** criteria. When faced with requests to support an international mission, such as one that primarily supports the **National Security Strategy**, there is a tendency to jump immediately to **Resource Allocation**.

This Plan is the mechanism by which most international mission requirements are inserted into the **Coast Guard Strategy**. Fundamentally, all Service mission requirements are considered in light of the Service's overarching strategy. Simply put, we should ask: "Is what I am doing aligned with the Commandant's international strategic guidance."

Figure 1 reflects an ideal process where one would methodically apply the National Security Strategy and CG Domestic Requirements as criteria to form **Coast Guard Strategy** and allocate resources. However, the realities of today reveal that resource availability often dictate a change to the proposed strategy. In effect, strategy is heavily driven by resources, resulting in strategy formulation and resource allocation being an interactive process. The formulation of our International Strategic Plan is not rigid; significant participation in the process is encouraged. That participation is highlighted by the Area Commanders, operational Assistant Commandants and Director, International Affairs formulating the objectives and actions required to achieve the strategic goals of this Plan. At the same time alignment and coordination must be assured through the organizational linkages and processes.

### Domestic Operations, Foreign Operations, and International Engagement

Figure 2 illustrates the complexity of Coast Guard-wide strategic goals (represented by ellipses) overlaid on the fields of domestic and international interests. Wherever they occur, Coast Guard operations should be grounded in our Service's strategic goals and missions and be in the interest of the United States. The nexus of the ellipses appropriately has a domestic mission focus. Outside the sphere of Coast Guard international operations directly relevant to our missions, our international engagements are meant to support agencies which hold the proper mandate for the engagement.



Figure 2. Coast Guard core strategic goals overlaid on the field of domestic and international interests.

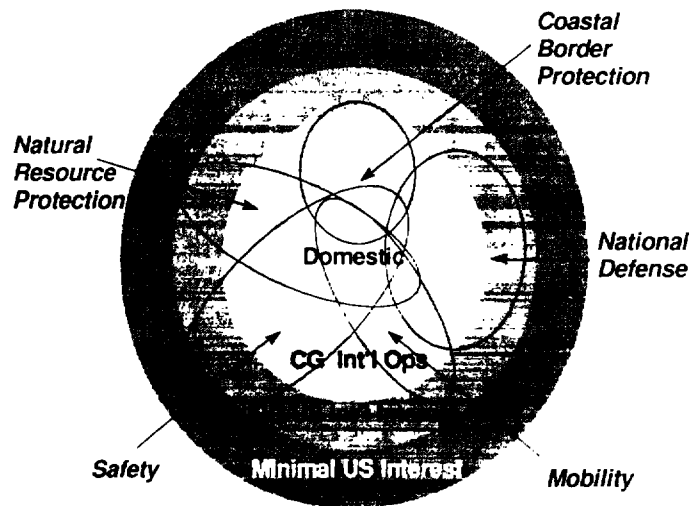


Figure 2. Coast Guard core strategic goals overlaid on the field of domestic and international interests

International engagement should normally not be pursued in the circle of nations or activities having minimal United States interest. However, we may have incidental or even significant influence in this area. For example our negotiation of international standards influence many smaller, third world nations.

Our domestic operations, international operations, and international engagement can be generally categorized as follows:

- A. **CG Funded Domestic Operations** - Coast Guard operations conducted within United States territory assume an international dimension when they involve foreign nationals and foreign vessels. However, these are domestic operations which are mandated by U.S. law; they involve assertions of port and coastal state legal authorities.
- B. **CG Funded International Operations** - These are Coast Guard-initiated and funded operations conducted seaward of any nation's territorial sea and airspace or inside their territory with their authorization. This category includes search and rescue, drug and migrant interdiction, fisheries law enforcement, and joint fleet operations with other U.S. naval services. While generally done unilaterally, bilateral and multilateral maritime enforcement operations, such as the Steel Gauntlet series of counter-narcotics operations in the eastern Caribbean, may also be included as international, CG funded operations. Absent a standing international agreement authorizing such cooperative ventures, interagency consultations under Presidential Directive/NSD-27 and a Commandant Statement of No Objection (SNO) are normally required prior to their initiation. The Coast Guard would likely conduct these operations regardless of the Service's level of international engagement. The difference between routine international operations and engagements involving Coast Guard interests (described in C.1. below) is often not clear in operations with Latin America and Pacific Rim nations.
- C. **International Peacetime Engagement** - Cooperative Coast Guard operations involving a foreign government and occurring at any location. Coast Guard funds may not be used to pay the costs of visiting foreign ships and delegations for the purpose of training, orientation, professional exchanges, and joint operations planning; therefore, for many international engagements, the Coast Guard acts as an instrument of a sponsoring agency that can legally engage and fund the operation. Three sub-categories of international engagement are:

### **Coast Guard International Strategic Plan**

1. **International Operations of Interest to USCG** - This engagement supports Coast Guard missions. For example, international resources are cultivated by the Coast Guard as force multipliers for our missions, such as search and rescue in the Caribbean, pollution response on our borders, and illegal drug interdiction in the Gulf of Mexico. The Coast Guard can conduct certain activities itself, such as those mentioned above, but may require external funding and/or direction from DOS for activities such as training and negotiating international drug enforcement agreements.
2. **U. S. International Interest** - Some activities are of limited direct interest to domestic Coast Guard mandates and missions, but are important to U.S. policy. The Coast Guard has no funding source or mandate for such international engagement, and is therefore sponsored by agencies with the mandate and funding to engage. The Coast Guard is used as an instrument of the agency with the legal mandate. Typically the Department of Defense (DOD) sponsors military activities, and the Department of State (DOS) sponsors other activities.
3. **Minimal U.S./USCG Interest** - Some engagements cannot be justified by U.S. policy interests or Coast Guard interests and capabilities. In the absence of compelling support by a U.S. agency, these requests should normally be denied.

### **Section 3**

#### **Action**

Our international strategic framework limits and focuses the sphere of potential engagement opportunities. However, these opportunities will exceed the resources available to the Coast Guard and must, therefore, be prioritized. Organizational links and decision-making criteria must identify opportunities that offer high return for the investment.

#### **Organizational Links**

International engagement policy is established by the Commandant and coordinated by the Director, International Affairs. Resource allocation occurs at the District, Area, and Program level, and the engagement is normally done at the unit or training team level. Organizational links must ensure consistent application of policy, use of decision mechanisms, and be responsive to changing priorities and procedures.

**Senior Organization.** Senior leadership establishes overall direction.

Operational Assistant Commandants on the Joint Operations/Marine Safety Coordinating Council (JOMSCC) address top level operational policy and resource allocation issues. The Director, International Affairs, serves as the Commandant's Foreign Policy Advisor and advises the JOMSCC on international matters.

Figure 3. Coordination and advisory role of G-CI and a broadly representative IAG

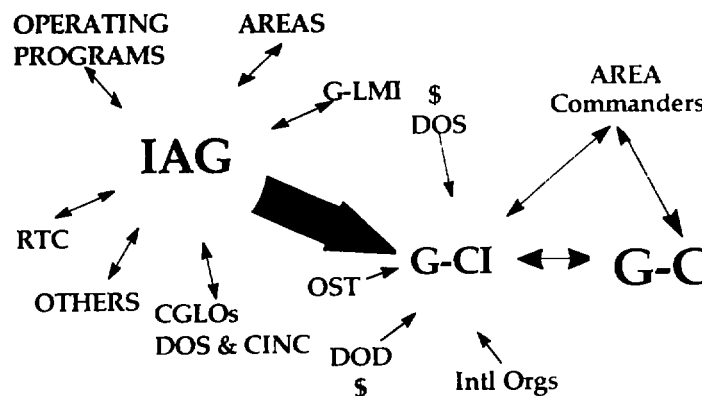


Figure 3. Coordination and advisory role of G-CI and a broadly representative IAG

Area Commanders are the key operational component. They direct the majority of resources employed in support of this Plan. Operational Assistant Commandants shape their programs to the requirements of the international arena, and often guide the reformulation of international standards on behalf of the United States. The Director, International Affairs, is the Commandant's key coordinator of international activities, ensuring alignment of field operations and plans with the Coast Guard's international strategy and the President's national security and foreign policy. The Director is the Coast Guard's primary link to the Department of State coordinating cross programmatic issues. The Director's leadership of the broad-based International Advisory Group (IAG) fosters a consistent, coordinated, and focused international strategy.

**International Advisory Group (IAG).** The IAG is a body intended to provide its Chairman, the Director, International Affairs, with cross programmatic recommendations on international engagements and deployments of Coast Guard assets. It ensures that other U.S. agencies and international counterparts experience a unified Coast Guard position on international matters. The IAG also maximizes opportunities to increase the impact of our efforts at the international level. It is the proper clearinghouse for ideas to be voiced, refined, and brought before the proper senior leadership entity by the Director, International Affairs. Enclosure 1 is the charter of the IAG.

**Area/District/Operating Program/International Affairs.** Senior organizational elements are cognizant of the international community within their sphere of operations, control resources used for engagement, and are in a position to analyze results and reassess customer needs. Therefore the Areas, operational Assistant Commandants, and G-CI maintain plans of their objectives and activities supporting the Commandant's International Strategic Goals. Preparation of these Plans is coordinated by G-CI through the IAG. The process is described below and in the IAG's Charter.

### Engagement Decision Mechanism

Our resources need to be directed toward on-the-mark initiatives that provide significant benefit to the United States and to the Coast Guard. International engagement must be a cyclical system of assessment, planning, and execution at three levels:

1. **Policy Level.** The general guidelines and the long-term vision and strategic goals of this International Strategic Plan should remain stable. However, the International Engagement Plan containing objectives

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and actions shall be reviewed and updated in an annual cycle leading to Commandant review. Each action undertaken by an Area or operational Assistant Commandant supports an objective which in turn supports one of the Plan's strategic goals. The actions are specific for the current year and the following year, and, if possible, generally stated for out- years two through five. Area and Assistant Commandant Plans may also include their over-arching strategies aligned with the strategies in this Plan. In preparation for Commandant review, each Area and Assistant Commandant updates their inputs for review at the spring IAG meeting. The IAG review includes (1) identifying conflicts, (2) weighing options, and (3) recommending revisions. The Director, International Affairs, using this information, develops an annual International Engagement Plan for presentation to the Commandant after the IAG's spring meeting.

2. **Operational Resource Allocation Level.** International engagement is, at times, a routine part of normal operations rather than a dedicated resource commitment. Recognition of this by planners at program, area, and district levels can ensure full use of resources. It is important that a cyclic system of assessment, planning, and execution be employed. The IAG is a repository of information on formal evaluation tools used to assess the opportunity against resource availability, and criteria used for assessing the request relative to country need.
3. **Front-line Engagement Level.** Whether it is a training team, a high endurance cutter, or a flag officer visit, the engagement resource should also conduct a cycle of assessment and planning along with execution of the engagement. It is important that the situation be assessed during the engagement, and that information on effectiveness and recommendations be passed to the command allocating the resources.

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International Advisory Group Charter**

**Leadership and Purpose.** The International Advisory Group (IAG) is chaired by the Director, International Affairs. Consisting of mid-level management representatives of the operational Assistant Commandants (G-M, G-O), Area Commanders, and selected support Assistant Commandants (G-L, G-W), the IAG coordinates international policy, makes recommendations across program lines, and strives for a consistent Coast Guard stance on international issues. The IAG helps the Coast Guard maximize opportunities to increase effectiveness at the international level. It is the proper clearinghouse for ideas to be voiced and brought before various Coast Guard leadership entities. The Director, International Affairs, will normally brief the results of IAG meetings to the Vice Commandant and present appropriate IAG recommendations to the Commandant for further consideration. The IAG coordinates the annual update of the objectives and actions under this Plan which form inputs to the annual International Engagement Plan prepared for Commandant review. The IAG shall:

1. Advise the Commandant's Director, International Affairs.
2. Identify opportunities to promote international cooperation and interaction in all Coast Guard mission areas.
3. Be a forum for information sharing and education; evaluate and discuss DOS, DOD/JCS policies and strategies as they effect Coast Guard international engagement.
4. Identify and help remove obstacles and conflicts that impede international cooperation.
5. Recommend new policies and changes to existing policies concerning international engagement.
6. Meet quarterly, after which the Director, International Affairs, as Chairman, IAG shall out-brief the Vice Commandant.
7. Develop an annual International Engagement Plan, primarily based upon inputs received from the Areas and the operational Assistant Commandants, for presentation and review by the Commandant. This engagement plan shall: 1) report on the past year's efforts; 2) detail specifics of the next year's engagements, and 3) provide a 2- 5-year outlook.

**IAG Members.** Designated members should be at the O-5/6 or GS-14/15 level and will serve as liaisons with Commandant's International Affairs Staff. Organizational elements represented include: Area Commanders, G-M, G-O, G-L, G-W, G-CI, RTC Yorktown, CG Liaison Officer to the Department of State, Department of Defense, NSC, Naval Justice School and other liaison officers as appropriate. Other offices are represented when their expertise is needed, such as a representative of the Chief of Staff at the annual engagement plan meeting in Spring to gain awareness of resource needs above program allocation.